

Messiah

Evangelical Lutheran Church

Answering God's call to love

Messiah ENewsletter for January 13, 2021

Messiah Events & News

On the web...

go to messiahlutheranmqt.org for more information about our congregation and “like” us on Facebook to receive updates and information there.

Messiah Lutheran Church seeks to be a welcoming community for all people. This includes people of every race, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity, ethnic background, economic grouping, religious affiliation, and political persuasion.

We do this simply because God created all people in God's own image and Christ Jesus came so all people might have abundant and eternal life.

We may not always be as welcoming as we should be, but this is our intention—all are welcome!



2021 Annual Meeting and Report

Due to the pandemic, our Council has decided to reschedule our annual meeting for a future date in June or July. While a remote (Zoom) meeting was discussed at length, the Council believes that any congregational meeting should allow all members to participate. The 2020

Annual Report will still be compiled by the end of January and will be shared in early February. Council will approve a preliminary 2021 budget at their January meeting that will also be shared with the 2020 report. Formal approval of that budget and the election of Council and committee members will take place at the rescheduled meeting. Ordinarily, Council would approve the budget at the January meeting and the congregation would vote on it at the annual meeting (in late January/early February). This year, the Council will approve the budget in January, but it will not be voted on by the congregation until the summer. There are no major changes to the budget anticipated and a narrative description of the budget will accompany it and the 2020 annual report. The Council/church will operate with the preliminary budget and Council and committee members will serve extended terms (they have voluntarily agreed to do so!) until the rescheduled meeting. If you have questions about these decisions, please don't hesitate to contact Pr. Andrew or Erik Bergh (Council President). Please submit your reports to Inga (inga@messiahlutheranmgt.org) by Monday January 18.

A Letter from Northern Great Lakes Synod Bishop Katherine Finegan January 11, 2021

Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

It may be 2021, but it still feels like 2020, as if we are in the 13th month of a year that refuses to end since not much has changed. We are still in a pandemic. Congregation leaders continue to discern the logistics and timing of in-person worship and ministry efforts. Please trust and respect their difficult discernment even as I know churches in your neighborhood may well be following different metrics. Your pastor and leadership have your safety as a priority; and paying attention to the advice of the health department and the number of available ICU beds is a faithful response to our current challenges.

Thankfully, there is a vaccine. And in some ways, this makes people even more anxious – impatient to get it, impatient to see results, impatient to return to “normal” worship, economy, and so much more.

All in good time.

And truthfully, we are distracted from that impatience as we worry and wonder about the challenges to the democratic systems of our great republic. Last Wednesday, January 6, on a day when we celebrate Epiphany, rioters breached our nation's Capitol building; destroying and defacing, looting and injuring. Five people died. Some say security guards were complicit, some say they were overrun. Some watched what was happening with satisfaction. Some watched with horror. There is a lot I do not understand about all that went on. There is even more that grieves me: the violence and the lies that drove it, the blatant racism, the partnering of “Jesus Saves” signs with a noose and gallows and calls to hang Vice President Pence, the beating of police officers by those who carried flags in support of police. It was an Epiphany

moment that gave the whole country new clarity as to the depth of our divisions, the power of disinformation to deceive, and hypocrisy.

Where do we go from here? As people of faith, as Christians who believe and proclaim the law of love in Christ, I want to offer a clear word about what I do know.

Racism is a sin.

White supremacy is sinful and in direct opposition to the Christian witness. It is an ideology incited by the father of lies and has no place in communities of faith or people that proclaim themselves to be Christian.

I do not know what is going to happen in the next week, ten days, or ten months. But I remain hopeful that the Church, and our congregations, are filled with the Holy Spirit of Christ to embody a voice of reason and truth, create spaces for rational discourse where we can meaningfully discuss our disagreements, and be a unifying influence that will nurture healing, patience, and compassion.

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Katherine Finegan

Pipe Organ Fundraiser

Plans are in the works for an online virtual fundraiser to raise money for recent rebuilding work on Messiah's pipe organ. We're in the process of constructing a website for the auction which will go live in early February. Details about this auction can be found in next week's ENews and the February Messenger.

Hildegarde Johnson Music Scholarship

We will have applications on the welcome table for anyone interested in applying for the 2021 Hildegarde Johnson Music Scholarship. The applications can be picked up at Messiah or they can be mailed to you, just call or email the church office. Once you have filled out the application, you can mail it back to Messiah or bring it to the church office. They will be collected through Sunday, February 28, 2021.

Hildegarde Johnson was a member of Messiah and was passionate about music. Members of the Worship & Music Team will evaluate the applications and inform recipients in March. Funds from this scholarship can be used for private music lessons, music camp, purchase of an instrument or music supplies, music books, or sheet music. Scholarship funds will be awarded to actively participating Messiah members who are in elementary, middle or high school. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the church office.

Christmas Poinsettias Available

We have nine poinsettias available at church for anyone who wants to take one home. Please stop by church during office hours 8:30 am to 3:30 pm Monday through Thursday.

Lenten 40-Day Racial Equity Challenge

This Lent, you are invited to participate in a synod-wide Racial Equity Challenge. You may remember our 21-day challenge from May & June, and now Pr. Molly and Pr. Andrew are working with the synod to broaden the participation, include indigenous resources, and deepen the conversation.

Participating in the Racial Equity Challenge is a personal commitment to devote time every day during Lent to engage in provided resources about the history and impact of racism, and the ways that bias, prejudice, privilege, and oppression show up in our everyday lives. Each day of the challenge will be a new opportunity to consider different voices and perspectives—a time to read, watch, listen, and learn. It is a time for self-examination and honesty. It is a time to open ourselves to the Holy Spirit, to be remade as vessels for God's love and reconciliation.

We hope that you will consider joining others across our Synod in guided conversations. The Challenge will begin February 18th and run for the week preceding Holy Week. Each participant will access the Challenge material online and be encouraged, but not required, to join a small group that will meet weekly for conversation via ZOOM. More information about registration will be made available by the synod. Please check their website (nglsynod.org) for further information. We will also try to share updates about registration on our Facebook page and in the February newsletter.

Virtual Worship

If you would like to worship with us from your home, we want to let you know some ways you can listen in and/or watch if you have a computer and internet access.

The 8:45 am worship will always be broadcast on the radio at Sunny 101.9 FM and streamed at the following sites: Vimeo - <https://vimeo.com/messiahlutheranmgt>

and Facebook - www.facebook.com/messiahlutheranmgt

A link to the bulletin will be sent each Wednesday in the same email where we send a link to Messiah's E-Newsletter. The bulletin can also be found on Messiah's website

www.messiahlutheranmgt.org Click on worship at the top of the page and then on Sunday's bulletin.

Stewardship

Every new year gives us a time to reflect on all that we have and also what we hope for. We give thanks for your generosity - of time, talent, and treasure - in 2020. Your financial partnership and support have helped us confidently navigate a difficult year. Thank you! Looking to 2021, we do not know exactly how our ministry will continue to grow and change. Thank you to those who have already submitted a "Plan for Giving" (pledge) card for 2021. Your plans for 2021 helps us know how to best be stewards of the resources entrusted to us. If you haven't already filled out a pledge card, you can do so online (<https://bit.ly/Messiah2021>), by calling our office, or requesting to have one mailed to you. We appreciate your assistance as we try to plan for the year ahead. Thank you for your continued prayers & support. We look forward to 2021 and the ministry that we will partner in as a Messiah family!

- Messiah's Stewardship Team

Confirmation- January 2021

As the leader, I was apprehensive to move confirmation to an online format. My apprehension was because I thought the students would not be able to get to know each other. While it is true that we do not have our social time to play games, I think this has been a productive time to get to know one another and learn new things. The students really listen to each other in this format! It has been fun to discuss ideas and different scripture passages as well.

Taking classes at Wartburg Theological Seminary has also given me some new insights. I have developed some lessons & learned new techniques to teach. I have been invited to take another Master's level class in the spring about Youth Ministry by one of my professors. I am really looking forward to learning all that I can and bringing it back to Messiah!

We were able to send over 50 Christmas cards to refugee children through LIRS. It is always the most meaningful part of Christmas to me. The fact that our church sends joy to people who need it most warms my heart. We met as a class over Zoom to share the cards we had made. People also dropped off cards at church for me to mail. Thank you Messiah for all the support and participation!

We will continue to hold confirmation class online until we are sure it is safe to meet in person. Again, thank you for your support! - Jen Elsenbroek

Reconciling in Christ Sunday—January 31st

As a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation, Messiah Lutheran Church will observe Reconciling Sunday in our worship on Sunday, January 31st. This is an opportunity to celebrate what it means to live a theology of reconciliation and lift up what being a Reconciling in Christ congregation means to us.

RIC is a program of ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation, begun in 1983 as a way for Lutheran communities of faith to answer the inclusive call of the Gospel by welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Currently, there are over 930 Lutheran settings on the RIC roster, including congregations, campus ministries, synods of the ELCA and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, camps, colleges, and other independent organizations. Additional information about the RIC program, including a complete listing of RIC settings and resources for personal and congregational use, are available on-line at the website www.reconcilingworks.org.

Qi Gong for Health & Wellness--Tuesdays, 12:00 - 1:00 pm

This Zoom class, sponsored in collaboration with Messiah Lutheran Church, is based on a series of gentle exercises developed by Buddhist monks. These exercises involve varying degrees of range of motion that can be done in a chair or standing.

Our class moves body structure for balance, stress and pain relief that are applied to daily activities: walking, turning, lifting, reaching, sitting. These gentle movements can also be used with prayer disciplines and use breathing as an essential component.

After greetings, each person in our class turns off their Zoom video on the computer and mute. The members enjoy the anonymity with permission to pause, go slower, to learn without being self-conscious or competitive. Since I can't see you, my concerns are for safety. I give ongoing verbal, detailed instructions for each movement. Each exercise includes individuals finding their range of motion, improving body structure, balance & breathing instructions.

There is, of course, no fee or charge for these classes but we invite you to make a contribution to Messiah Lutheran Church food bank at any time as a sign of thanksgiving.

--Diana Magnuson, 906-362-9386

Migrating Women & Their Experience with Gender-Based Violence

The allegations of medical neglect and invasive gynecological procedures in a privately-run detention center in Irwin County, Ocilla, Ga.—including coerced sterilization—quickly drew disbelief and condemnation worldwide this fall. Far from unique, these shocking allegations echo the historic and current reality of cruel and inhumane treatment towards migrant women. At every stage and step of their lives, migrants, immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers are at special risk of having their fundamental human rights violated.

GBV as a migration driver

What drives people to migrate will vary from person to person, but one of the most cited reasons is to escape from domestic abuse and violence. For countless women, girls, and LGBTQIA+ persons in the Northern Triangle of Central America—El Salvador, Guatemala,

and Honduras—sexual- and gender-based violence (GBV) is inescapable reality. Every day, over 100 cases of violence against women are filed in Guatemala. In 2018, a woman was killed in Honduras every 18 hours. El Salvador has the highest rate of femicide in Latin America and in an 8-month span of time in 2020 at the height of pandemic quarantine measures, reported 84 femicides. Globally, gender-based violence is widely recognized as a key human rights issue, as highlighted in the international 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence campaign. Even these figures likely do not capture the full scope of the violence experienced by women. Social stigma, fear of retribution and lack of confidence in authorities often contribute to underreporting.

Shifts in U.S. Policy Toward Asylum Seekers

The United States has a policy of granting limited humanitarian protections to persons fleeing gender-based persecution and violence. Unfortunately, over time, these protections have become harder to access. Under President Trump, the U.S. government has undermined protections for people fleeing domestic abuse and gang violence and turned away asylum seekers, trap-ping families, men, women and children in precarious conditions without any meaningful access to protection. People at risk of GBV thus contend with persecution at home, in transit, and even from U.S. authorities.

ELCA responds to human need

While working with migrating, returned and deported women, civil society organizations and faith-partners have expressed the need for services geared at empowering women socially, politically and economically. The ELCA's AMMPARO strategy (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) has placed a special emphasis on working with advocates in Central America who give witness to these perilous conditions and supported their advocacy efforts.

“Migrants, immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers often suffer more when they are women, girls, or gender non-conforming people” notes the ELCA social statement Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action.” “Women, girls, and people who identify as non-binary must not be deprived of their human or civil rights.” When the disturbing account of human rights violations against immigrant women in custody of the privately run Irwin County Detention Center surfaced, ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton stated, “As the ELCA we strongly condemn gender-based violence and violations of human rights wherever they occur.”

Threats in U.S. detention

Abuse of women is widespread in immigration detention centers and constitutes a serious threat to the civil and personal liberties of migrants. The detained population has multiplied over the last 30 years under a U.S. government policy to apprehend and detain increasing numbers of immigrants. Alternatives such as community-based alternatives to detention, although humane, less costly and more effective, have not been pursued, overburdening an already

strained system at the expense of the people detained. The United Nation High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) guidance says that all immigration practices should implement special measures to protect women from sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation in detention. According to the UNHCR, other groups that are vulnerable to abuse, like children and members of the LGBTQIA+ community, should also be afforded special measures to guarantee their safety. The UNHCR mainly advocates that detention should be used as a measure of last resort and asylum seekers should be given every opportunity to seek protection. The U.S. government must do more to meet even this basic standard of care. In fact, the U.S. federal government has become one of the most egregious perpetrators and accessories of GBV. Between 2010 and 2017, there was a staggering 1,224 complaints of sexual assault abuse in Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detention yet only 43 investigations. Based upon known patterns, these numbers likely reflect underreporting. We know people don't come forward out of fear of retaliation and are not consistently supported by confidence in prosecution of perpetrators. Like most cases of GBV, these acts are committed in nearly total impunity.

What can we do?

Increased scrutiny at Irwin creates new incentives for advocacy-Supporting policies that aim to curb profiting from people's suffering are one way to stamp out immigration practices in the U.S. that deprive women of their liberty and rights.-Restoring the asylum system so that victims have access to humanitarian protections goes without saying—though the underlying definition of gender-based asylum could stand to be improved.

-Supporting survivors of violence at the onset through advocacy in their home countries, so that they do not feel obligated to flee, must also be an objective of any strategy to prevent and mitigate acts of GBV. The escalation of intimate partner violence, evidenced by the spike in femicides in El Salvador, signals the need to expand local programs for women in need of protection in their homes.-The Keeping Women and Girls Safe from the Start Act of 2020 (S. 4003) includes some important measures to expand the U.S. government's ability to prevent gender-based violence and provide early interventions at the onset of humanitarian emergencies. These are just a few examples of systemic and institutional changes that can be made, and they are very likely to take some time to be implemented. However, these lay the groundwork for a just and compassionate solution to the unacceptable reality of sexual- and gender-based violence.

The New Free Store Donations

The New Free Store needs your help. They are an inter-faith, non-profit group supporting people in the greater Marquette area who express a need for free clothing, linen, hygiene & cleaning supplies. Over 850 families are now registered to shop for free & that number

continues to grow. When doing your weekly shopping, please remember the items noted below in the coming months. Thank you for your support! Feel free to leave these items in The New Free Store 'drop-box' in Messiah's narthex.

*January - toothbrushes (kids & adults), toothpaste, denture cleaner, dental floss

*February - toilet paper (packages of 4 or 6 rolls)

Messiah Birthdays

Wednesday 13 William Beauchaine, Bob Cambensy, Marie Sarkela, Kaitlin Sellers

Thursday 14 Paige Gilbert

Friday 15 Ginny Olson, Anne Rydholm

Saturday 16 Bev Evans, Kristian Jackson

Sunday 17 Janice Anderson, Inga Banitt

Monday 18 No birthdays

Tuesday 19 Lucy Contois, Mae Desonia, Bill Maki

Wednesday 20 Tanner Delpier, Mary Fleury, Gayle Van Osdol

Thursday 21 No birthdays

Friday 22 Amy Froiland

Saturday 23 Robert Groleau

Sunday 24 No birthdays

Monday 25 Mary Leslie, Laura Slavsky

Tuesday 26 Rose Collins, Rich Matthews, Nancy Russell

Wednesday 27 Amie Evans, Marie Voskuhl

Prayer Requests

While we are apart from one another, it is still important that we hold one another in prayer. We have posted a prayer request form on our Messiah Family and Friends Facebook page, and those who are not on Facebook or do not have computer access can call the church office with their prayer requests.

We value being a community of prayer for one another during this difficult time and always.

In the Hospital

Please inform the church office when you are hospitalized. Pastor Andrew Plocher and Pastor Molly Eversoll want to call you while you are there during this time of COVID-19. If you can't notify Messiah, please ask a family member to do so.

In Our Prayers

Jordan Negro, Gina, Scotti Oja & her family, John & Rose Collins, Liz Beyne & Frank upon the passing of Liz's sister & Frank's wife, Alice; Loretta, Jess Laxo & her grandma Betty, Erin Andrews, Candace, Tina & her roommate, Ted Koehler, Carol, Matthew Williamson, Ron Hill, ill residents/patients & care workers at the Jacobetti VA facility & other nursing homes in our area, inmates & staff at Marquette Branch Prison, Dennis Riutta, Bob & Deb Vidlund, Bill Van Effen, Roger B, Linda Ruohoniemi, Jim Shirtz, Cheryl, Ryan, Helen Steinhoff, Billi Jo, Pat Maki, Dan, Herb & Sandy Grenke, Wayne Hanmer, Judy Donckers, Ann Marin, Karen Johnson, Jill Krah, Michael Orhanen, Kristina Asta, Jim, Alli & Johann Elsenbroek, Alison Cory, John, Sierra, Sandy, Charlene Avery, Liz Kro

Note: You may call the church office or talk to one of the pastors, if you would like a person named in the congregation's prayers. Please obtain permission from the person to list his/her name in the bulletin. In order to keep the list up to date and manageable in size, we will list each person for a short time, after which the name will be removed. If at that point, you would like to continue listing the person, please call the church office or speak to one of the pastors.

Pastor on Call:

Pastor Andrew is on call January 13, 17-20.

Pastor Molly is on call January 14-16.

Messiah Newsletters

Messiah newsletters and the weekly E-news are all available at www.messiahlutheranmgt.org. The online Messenger (monthly newsletter) includes all the stories and information but saves the paper!

Scripture Reading This Week – Second Sunday after Epiphany

First Reading..... 1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]

Gospel Reading..... John 1:43-51

Worship Volunteers

Sunday January 17

Gayle Van Osdol

Sunday January 24

Darley Kempainen

Sunday January 31

Mike Hill

Sunday February 7

Larry Pagel

Sunday February 14

Ruth Robb

Announcements and Classified Ads

Foreign Policy Discussion Group at Peter White Public Library

Peter White Public Library is hosting the discussion group “Great Decisions,” America’s largest and oldest foreign policy discussion group. Prior to each meeting, participants can read up on the topic in the *Great Decisions Briefing Book*. Meetings will feature either a knowledgeable speaker or a PBS video followed by a discussion on the month’s topic. Speakers will include professors from NMU and Michigan Tech. At the end of the program, participants will have the opportunity to submit an opinion ballot that will be shared with government officials and decision makers. No background knowledge on foreign policy needed!

PWPL has a limited number of Briefing Books to give away for **free** to participants, over a \$30 value! The book will also be available at the library for checkout.

To check out the discussion topics for 2021 and learn more about the program [click here](#).

When: The fourth Tuesday of the month January-August 2021 at 6 p.m.

Where: Meetings will be held via Zoom unless safe to do otherwise.

Admission: Free

Contact: Dory Shaffer to sign up or get your briefing book phone: (906) 226-4311 email: refedsk@pwpl.info

This program is funded by the Michigan Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities

Do you have an announcement?

Send announcements and ads to Inga Banitt (inga@messiahlutheranmqt.org). Send concert or performance information, yard sale announcements, party invitations, requests for babysitters, yard maintenance, rooms for rent and items for sale. We will run announcements for two weeks. E-newsletter deadline is noon on Tuesdays.

Messiah Contact Information

Messiah Lutheran Church
305 W. Magnetic St.
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906-225-1119
906-225-5025 (fax)
Email: office@messiahlutheranmqt.org
Website: <https://www.messiahlutheranmqt.org/>

Pastoral Staff

Senior Pastor:
Andrew Plocher
906-373-6036

Associate Pastor:
Molly Eversoll
312-576-7353

Support Staff

Parish Administrator:
Jennifer Dodge
906-235-4921

Administrative Assistant:
Inga Banitt
906-362-1545

Messiah Custodian:
Kevin McGrath
906-226-2097

Parish Accountant:
Mike Hill
906-228-2544

Financial Secretary:
Nancy Hoover
612-419-3000

Music Staff

Music Director:
David Dagenais
906-869-1441

Bell Choir Director:
Judy Quirk
906-228-6729

Organist:
Kathy Strazzinski
906-869-7871

Pianist:
Lynne Lanczy
906-235-4431